

forest edge. This observation extends the range of *Pionopsitta barrabandi* 160 km to the north.

The White-browed Purpletuft *Iodopleura isabellae* is distributed in west-central South America east of the Andes. Hitherto, in Venezuela, it has been recorded in southern Amazonas north to the junction of the Río Guaviare and Orinoco (Meyer de Schauensee & Phelps, *loc. cit.*; Snow 1982, *The Cotingas*). Although widely distributed, it is considered uncommon (Hilty & Brown, *loc. cit.*). Its preferred habitat is humid evergreen forest to 500 m.

On 23 July 1991 I observed two individuals of the White-browed Purpletuft in the area mentioned above. They were perching in the top of a vine-entangled tree about 20 m high at the forest edge. From time to time they sallied out to capture insects, and several times disappeared behind vine leaves probably in search of fruits. This observation extends the range of *Iodopleura isabellae* 160 km to the north.

Virtually unbroken rainforest extends from the junction of the rivers Guaviare, Orinoco and Atabapo north to Gavilán. These range extensions are therefore not unexpected; few ornithologists visit Amazonian Venezuela, and especially not during the rainy season. The area has been closed to ordinary tourism until recent years and access is very difficult without aeroplane and boat.

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THE NEST OF THE LARGE-BILLED ANTWRN *HERPSILOCHMUS LONGIROSTRIS*

Very little is known of the biology of the Large-billed Antwren *Herpsilochmus longirostris*, an endemic antbird of eastern and central Brazil, spottily recorded from Piauí, Tocantins and Mato Grosso south to Mato Grosso do Sul, São Paulo and Paraná. Recent observations have shown that it inhabits the middle and lower strata of both humid and semideciduous forests, palm groves (*buritizais*) and gallery forests of central Brazil, and also secondary habitats. Like other members of the genus, *H. longirostris* often joins mixed flocks composed of such species as *Picumnus albosquamatus*, *Veniliornis passerinus*, *Sittasomus griseicapillus*, *Lepidocolaptes angustirostris*, *Taraba major*, *Myiarchus swainsoni*, *Todirostrum cinereum*, *Idioptilon striaticolle*, *Myiopagis caniceps*, *Camptostoma obsoletum*, *Polioptila dumicola*, *Cyclarhis gujanensis*, *Conirostrum speciosum* and *Coereba flaveola*, as we observed at Santa

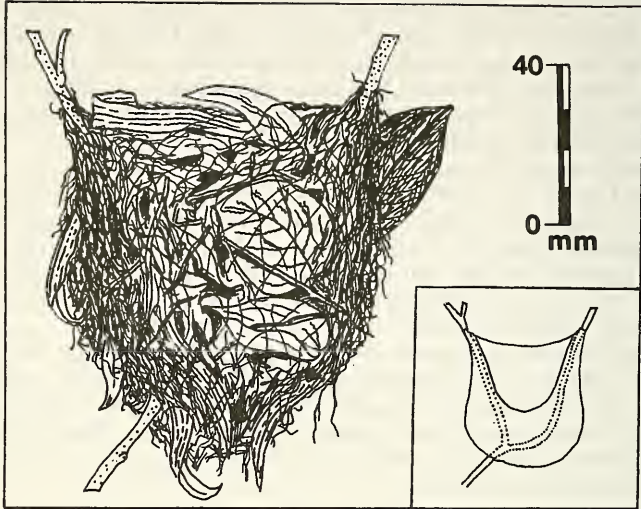


Figure 1. Nest of the Large-billed Antwren *Herpsilochmus longirostris*, lateral view.

Isabel do Morro (c. $11^{\circ}34'S$, $50^{\circ}40'W$), Bananal Island, Tocantins, in July 1981. Like other antbirds, the Large-billed Antwren occasionally follows army ants, and also scans the surface of leaves and branches looking for small insects such as Orthoptera and geometrid caterpillars. Its call seemed to us very similar to that of *Herpsilochmus rufimarginatus* and *H. pectoralis*: a rhythmic sequence of descending notes, resembling the typical calls of several antshrikes *Thamnophilus* spp.

Virtually nothing is known of the breeding biology of *Herpsilochmus* as a whole (Sick 1985, *Ornitologia brasileira: uma introdução*), and the Large-billed Antwren is no exception. On 10 October 1989, we discovered its nest in a secondary forest of Ilha Grande, Paraná river, municipality of Altônia, Paraná (c. $24^{\circ}03'S$, $54^{\circ}12'W$). The nest, now housed in the Museu Macional, is a small cup of vegetable material, 60 mm in total length, 50 mm in width and 80 mm in height, with an egg chamber 60 mm deep (Fig. 1). Both parents attended the nest, which was placed 1.5 m above the ground, concealed among the branches of a lauraceous tree (*Ocotea suaveolens*), and was composed of several leaves (especially of the bamboo *Guadua spinosissimum*), spadices of an unidentified grass, filaments of the fungus *Marasmius*, kapok and radicels. In general shape it is similar to the nests of several other antbirds such as *Thamnophilus*, *Dysithamnus*, some species of *Myrmotherula* etc. Judging from the gonads of a small series collected in southern Mato Grosso and western Paraná, *H. longirostris* breeds during the spring (September–December), at the beginning of the rainy season.

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BOOKS RECEIVED

ICBP 1992. *Putting Biodiversity on the Map: priority areas for global conservation*. Pp. vi+90, 36 figures, photographs. International Council for Bird Preservation, 32 Cambridge Road, Girton, Cambridge CB3 0PJ. ISBN 0 946888 24 8. £12.50. 30 × 21 cm.

This is an important publication, and especially interesting to ornithologists as the priority areas are based primarily on birds, whose distribution is better known than that of any other major animal group. It aims to identify and map all important centres of endemism, based on the known distribution of all bird species with breeding ranges of less than 50,000 km². The ranges of these species of limited distribution fall into a number of natural groupings: 221 such groupings (Endemic Bird Areas) have been identified, and they embrace 2484 species, the vast majority (95%) of all species with restricted ranges and a sizeable fraction of the world's birds. Obviously, a large majority of the species with wider ranges also occur in the Endemic Bird Areas, which are thus of prime importance for bird conservation as a whole. (The north temperate regions are the only exception, as the northernmost Endemic Bird Area is the Caucasus; also seabirds do not easily fit into the pattern.) But these centres of bird endemism have an even wider importance, as a review of the literature on other groups shows that there is a high degree of congruence between Endemic Bird Areas and the main areas of endemism of other animals and plants.

This book, soft-covered, on glossy paper, with coloured figures (mainly maps) and photographs, and detailed Appendices, has been produced in a style which should not only satisfy the professional biologist and experienced naturalist but also attract and hold the attention of policy-makers. One must hope that it has the impact that it deserves. To quote from Foreword by E. O. Wilson of Harvard, one of the world's leading biologists: "To staunch this haemorrhaging [of the world's living diversity], to serve ourselves and generations further into the future than it is possible to imagine, we must somehow deflect the hammer blows [of man's unrelenting impact on the environment]. But they must fall somewhere, due to population growth and industrialization. From which points then on earth should we deflect them? A first relatively detailed answer is the brilliant achievement of the ICBP Biodiversity Project."

Jonsson, L. 1992. *Birds of Europe with North Africa and the Middle East*. Pp. 559, numerous colour illustrations and maps. Christopher Helm—A. & C. Black. ISBN 0 7136 8096 2. £25.00. 21 × 14 cm.

Among the almost bewildering succession of European field-guides this one, not only illustrated but also written by an outstanding bird artist, is something new. In the first place its geographical scope is unique for a single-volume field-guide, covering as it does North Africa north of the Sahara and the Middle East—approximately, in fact, the same